Aristasia Treasure Trove

Celeste de Gotha Friday, Apr 27 2007

Aristasiansaristasia12:38 pm

Please pardon my intrusion upon your discussion, but Hautefontaine becomes so lonely when my Maman is away… I thought it would not be unfitting if I sought diversion here. . Our country is called France, but it is not the France you know: it is another France, far distant, bordering Amazonia, and our customs are said to be very strange — I have heard it whispered that Westerners would consider us immoral. I don't know why… everything here seems perfectly in tune with the Golden Order to me. I know that France is the best and most delightful of all places in the world, and Hautefontaine is the dearest of all chateaux, and I am a lucky maid indeed to be situated as I am.

I should not like you to think that I am anything but the most proper of blondes, so I shall be on my very best behaviour here, as if I were invited into the secret cabinets of our dear blonde Queen, Marie-Antoinette! It is not such a stretch to imagine that, for I was presented at Versailles when I was not quite fourteen, and fresh from a year at school in the West. I have sat amongst Her Majesty's ladies several times, as we nibbled Turkish Delight and told each other's fortunes, and spied on the new court artists from behind our fans! The last time, Marie-France slipped in and snatched my fan, and refused to give it back until I promised to ride with the Royal Hunt the very next morning! She really is the most incorrigible of brunettes, but a lot may be forgiven a Dauphine!Oh! I have not introduced myself, have I? Very well: I am, by the grace of Dea, Marie-Marguerite Celeste Emma de Saint-Vire, Marquise de Gothia. My Maman is Nathalie Ghislaine Electra de Saint-Vire, Marquise de Saint-Vire, Comtesse de Roquejardin, Comtesse de Gothia, and Generelle de Saint-Vire. Yes, 'Generelle', for in addition to the titles settled upon her, she is a great military commandress, and wears the most lovely blue and gold uniforms. She's my brunette Maman; my own darling blonde Maman passed on some years ago… she was an Englishwoman; Lady Emma Hamilton, and it is after her, in part, that I am named. Marie-Marguerite is for my grandmere, the Duchesse de Gothia, head of our family even though she has passed many of her duties and titles to my Maman. But in deference to those two ladies, I am called by the least distinguished of my names: Celeste. You may address me as Mademoiselle de Saint-Vire, or de Gothia, or Mademoiselle la Marquise, as we say. Perhaps when we know each other a little better, we may use first names.

Haven't I a very large name? I'm sad to say it goes with being a very large blonde… don't mistake: my waist is as neat as Her Majesty's, but I am as tall as a beanpole, and even my Maman can barely look over my head! I'm seventeen years old now, and I still seem to be shooting upwards, as if, Marie-France says, my hair is trying to reunite with the sun that once kissed it.

At least, that is almost what she said… I am not as adept at translating from French to Westrenne as my Maman is, *bas bleu* though I am. My language may sometimes seem clumsy to you. I hope you won't mind. I should like very much to be liked here, for the company of my ladies, while always soothing, isn't always scintillating. They do not read as I do — I don't imagine many brunettes do either, for, you see, I was reared by a Generelle who is also a scholar, and my earliest memories are of her reading aloud to my blonde Maman and me. Books are just as beautiful to me as satin slippers, and given my choice, I should go without slippers to have a new book to dizzy myself with.

While my tutors never forgot my blondeness, they educated me almost as they would a brunette — in deportment and music and drawing, to be sure, but also in history and literature and geography and languages. I speak, read, and write, French, Westrenne, Italienne, and Latin, and I have a little German… and when I travelled in the East with my Maman, for her studies, I learned a few words of the strange tongues spoken there. I forget things, of course… my Maman says that even the most intelligent blondes tend to lack mental organisation, and she says it in such a loving way that my cheeks flush and my irregular verbs fly right out of my head. But she is patient with me, and coaxes them back between my ears, however long it takes. Do you think such learning unfits me for marriage? I overheard Madame la Comtesse de Pougy say as much to my Maman… but who minds La Pougy, I wonder? Not our circle, to be sure! La, I speak as though I were already a saloniste!

I must go now… I have babbled on too long as it is, and I hear Sidonie looking for me, to dress me for the evening. I shall wear my new powder-blue velvet, with cabochon diamonds about my throat, and I think I should like my hair dressed a la Melisande. Pouf! I'm glad powdered hair is no longer in vogue; it made me sneeze horribly! But you can see, here, in this portrait by Madame Fragonard, that it *did* become me!

Affectionately,

Celeste de Gothia

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My Brunette Sunday, Apr 22 2007

Aristasiansaristasia11:11 am

Miss Christine Batten wondered:
Although still languishing in the outermost of the circles, I aspire to truly Aristasian blondeness. I would be overjoyed if my beloved "brunette" Josephine had similar ambitions but she believes there is no place for her in Aristasia. She hails from Tellurian Nigeria and is about as brunette as one could be, in appearance. Can anyone help me persuade her otherwise?

Miss Sushuri Novaryana replied:
Dear Miss Batten – I do not know on what grounds your brunette feels there is no place for her in Aristasia. If she fears that she would not be welcome, please allow me to lay that fear to rest. There are girls from all over Telluria involved in Aristasia at various levels – from Kenya, Jamaica, China, India and lots of other places.

You mention being on the outermost circle of Aristasia, and it is true, as you have clearly understood, that Aristasians do think in circles (no blonde jokes here, please) from the outermost circle, where one simply has a general attachment to Aristasia, probably among many other attachments in the Pit, to the innermost where one regards Aristasia as one's true Nation and Culture and no longer sees oneself as a Tellurian at all.

Whatever level one is at, the question is the same regardless of where one comes from in Telluria – how far does one identify with Aristasia?

So please tell your brunette that girls are welcome in Aristasia wherever they come from, whatever their colour or culture. And they are welcome at any level – so if a girl is thinking that she wants to retain lots of her Tellurian culture, that is fine, an outerish circle is where she wants to be. If she wants to become fully Aristasian but wonders how her cultural background will fit in, remember that Aristasia has assimilated girls from just about everywhere. The process of becoming fully Aristasian is different for each individual, but race and culture are not barriers.

Miss Belleanne added:

I used to live next door to a Nigerian girl named Fatima who was so beautiful that I could barely keep from sighing when I met her in the lift or the laundry-room. She and her brother had been sent overseas for their education (their father was rather an important emir; I looked him up once), and she was one of the few truly polite and graceful people I met there. I say, the more Nigerians the better!

See also

Concentric Circles

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Malinka's Story Friday, Apr 20 2007

Aristasiansaristasia1:18 am

My name is Malinka. I am a soldier-maid, a warrior from Far Eastern Amazonia. I am lucky enough to serve in the Rayin's, that is, Queen's, very own Guard and for many years I was honoured to be always at her side, serving her faithfully, fighting many battles.

But there came a dark day when I was wrested from her and I floated in a limbo near tall, forbidding buildings, strange noisy machines and grey overcast skies. I was born a child, and in a land such as I never knew. I was bewildered and frightened. As I grew older and came to consciousness I saw I was in a Godless land where everything was askew and no-one lived by ritual or beauty or poetry or magic. How my heart ached! I felt completely abandoned and everything was meaningless.

But praise be to Dea, and to Her handmaiden the glorious Vikhe, goddess of warriors! One day I was called to a small band of other warriors and I looked in their eyes and they looked in mine and we knew each other. I had found my compatriots and I was alone no longer and we built ourselves the land of Aristasia apart from and yet accessible from the strange land you know as the Pit.

I lived many years among the maidens and in their provinces, though sadly we were mostly in the West near Vintesse and Quirinelle. Some of us particularly liked Novaria because it reminded us of home with its Eastern flavouring. But I always was a maid of habit and I missed the wildness and the passion – the dancing, the battles, the songs and ale by the campfires on windswept battlefields.

I fought in, and even led, many magical campaigns against the Demons of Darkness who thronged in the strange land outside and beneath our Provinces, who often attacked us. I fought the battles successfully, but I yearned for my very own Province, for the land of my heart, and I yearned for lost maidens, some soldier-maids, some the healing sisters that tend the wounded, yearned for eyes I had not found among the maidens of Aristasia.

So one day I went on a mission, away from Aristasia, away from the safety I had known there, away from my friends and fellow-warriors and into the ravaged plains of the Pit. It was a lonely journey, and sometimes I felt faint and unsure of my mission. But I felt Dea's hand upon my shoulders, and Vikhe's songs at my lips and I sang the warrior song called "The Iron Ring" as I journeyed. And it was this, this song, that led me to a broken warrior, who was mending and who needed my help. But more of this another time.

Malinka FiaBrighe of the House of Colwyn

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